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Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Fifty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 31 August 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I am writing to draw your attention to the most recent, and unspeakably horrific, Palestinian terrorist attack perpetrated against the citizens of Israel.

Today, at 2.50 p.m. local time, two suicide bombers blew themselves up in near-simultaneous attacks on buses in the Israeli city of Be'er Sheva. At least sixteen Israelis were murdered in these explosions, and over one hundred more were maimed. A three-year-old boy was among the dead, the latest of the many young victims of Palestinian terror. In their leaflet proudly claiming responsibility for the attack, the Palestinian terror group Hamas, which receives active support from Iran and Syria and operates freely in Palestinian Authority territory, even added a threat to recent immigrants to Israel, saying to them, "This is your fate, so wait."

Early reports indicate that the bombers and their accomplices likely came from the West Bank town of Hebron, infiltrating into Israel in an area where the security fence has yet to be erected. In contrast, in areas where the security fence has already been completed, there have been no successful terror attacks in Israel for five months, despite a steady stream of attempts. Today's attack is a tragic illustration of the unfortunate need for the security fence.

Earlier in the day Israeli forces foiled a suicide attack when a Palestinian terrorist, posing as a labourer, attempted to infiltrate into Israel from Gaza with an explosive device hidden in his trousers. This incident illustrates, yet again, the willingness of Palestinian terrorists to exploit the passage granted to innocent Palestinian civilians so as to pursue their murderous campaign. As a result, they endanger not only the innocent Israeli civilians they target, but the life and

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livelihood of ordinary Palestinians whom they hide amongst in violation of the most basic human rights and humanitarian norms.

The Palestinian leadership's ongoing refusal to live up to its moral and legal obligations, including those in the very first clauses of phase I of the Road Map, to fight terrorism and the infrastructure that supports it, remains the key obstacle to progress. Instead of living up to their binding legal obligations, and thus paving the way for peaceful dialogue, the Palestinian side is busily engaged in diversionary tactics, cheap propaganda and accusations, including in United Nations forums, that pretend that the Palestinian side has rights but no responsibilities and compel Israel to engage in defensive measures. The cost of this morally bankrupt strategy is paid in the lives of innocents, the stagnation in the peace process, and the suffering of both Israelis and Palestinians. As long as it continues in the criminal abdication of its responsibilities, encouraging and glorifying terrorist action instead of actively confronting it, Israel will be compelled to adopt the necessary defensive measures in accordance with international law and its inherent right of self-defence, to protect its citizens.

Israel calls upon the international community not to tolerate Palestinian attempts to divert attention from their absolute duty to fight terrorism, which is the enemy of both peoples, and the greatest single obstacle to progress on the Road Map. In this context, we call on the international community to reaffirm its absolute rejection of terrorist tactics, and to accept nothing less than the complete dismantling of terrorist organizations, and relentless efforts to prevent terrorism and bring its perpetrators and supporters to justice, in accordance with international law and Security Council resolution, in particular resolution 1373 (2001).

I submit this letter in follow-up to numerous letters detailing the campaign of Palestinian terrorism launched in September 2000, which document the crimes for which the terrorists and their supporters must be held fully accountable.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as an official document of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 156 and 67. An identical letter is being submitted to the President of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dan **Gillerman**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative